

Articles

Explanations

Definite article

Basic uses of articles are assumed known.

1 Classes

This is one way to refer to classes, and is perhaps more formal than using a plural: ***The tiger*** *is threatened with extinction*,

2 National groups

Groups as a whole.

The French *eat in restaurants more than the English.*

Single examples are not formed in the same way:

A Frenchman/woman, an Englishman/woman

3 Other groups

If these are clearly plural:

The Social Democrats, The Rolling Stones

Note the difference:

Pink Floyd, Queen (no article)

4 Unique objects

The moon, the sun

Note that there are other suns and moons in the universe:

This planet has a small moon.

5 Titles

These tend to be 'unique'.

The director of studies

If the title is post-modified (has a description coming after the noun), *the* is more likely, but not essential. Compare:

She became President in 1998,

She became (the) President of the United States in 1998.

6 Other titles

The may be part of the title, and so is capitalised.

Newspapers: *The Independent, The Sunday Times*

Titles of books and films etc do not have *the* unless there is post-modification.

The Phantom of the Opera.

'The' is sometimes dropped in everyday speech.

Have you seen 'Phantom of the Opera'?

7 Musical instruments

The is included if ability to play is mentioned.

Jane plays the flute.

A description of playing might not use *the*.

Jane played a flute and Paul played a recorder.

8 Emphatic use

This is heavily stressed and emphasises the following noun.

*This hotel is **the** place to stay.*

See also Unit 14.

9 Geographical names The

following use *the*:

rivers: *the Thames*

mountain ranges: *the Alps*

oceans: *the Mediterranean*

unique features: *the Channel, the Arctic*

compass points/areas: *the East, the Middle East*

countries: collective or plural: *The United Kingdom, The Netherlands*

This does not apply to:

lakes: *Lake Geneva*

mountain peaks: *Everest* (but *The Matterhorn*)

continents: *Asia* countries: *France*

The definite article is sometimes used before Lebanon and Gambia:
The Lebanon, The Gambia

10 Place names

Post-modification, especially with*of*... plays a role in place names.

Compare:

Leeds University/The University of Leeds

London Bridge /The Tower of London

If the first part of a place-name is another name, then normal rules about zero article apply.

Brown's Restaurant

The Garden House Hotel

The same applies in geographical names:

Canvey Island

The Isle of Man

11 *Most* and *the most*

Most without an article means 'the greater part'.

*I live in London **most of the time**.*

*This is **the most expensive** hotel in town.*

12 Importance of context

The definite article refers to already mentioned items, and so its use depends on context.

*The Smiths had a son and a daughter. **The** son was in the Army and **the** daughter was training to be a doctor. On **the** Saturday, there was a terrible storm.*

Here, *the Saturday* refers to a day in a area of time already mentioned.

*On the Saturday **of that week...***

Indefinite article

1 Jobs

Compare: *Tony is **a** builder. Tony was **the** builder of that house.*

2 In measuring

*Three times **a** week. Fifty kilometres **an** hour.
£3.50 **a** kilo. 15 000 **a** year.*

Formally, per can replace a/an.

3 Unknown people

Use of a/an emphasises that a person is unknown.

***A** Mr Jones called while you were out.*

Zero article

1 Names Compare:

*Matthew Smith is one of my favourite artists, (a person)
A Matthew Smith hangs in their bedroom, (a painting)*

2 Some unique organisations do not use *the*.

Parliament, but The (House of) Commons

3 Streets

Most streets do not use an article.

Green Road Godwin Street

Exceptions are:

The High Street, The Strand

and street names without preceding adjectives. Compare:

Holly Drive, The Drive

Translation problems

Study these sentences. Would you use an article in your language?

I know how to use *a* computer.

A pound and *a* half of cheese.

I was holding it *in* my hand.

It's a film about _ homeless people.

Terry has _ flu. I've got *a* headache.

Activities

The activities include revision material.

In each space
put *a/an* or
the, or leave
the space
blank.

It has been announced that for (1) *the* third consecutive month there has been (2)..... rise in (3)number of (4) unemployed, rather than (5)..... fall that had been predicted. (6).....rise was blamed on (7) continuing uncertainty over (8)..... government economic policy, and couldn't come at (9) worse time for (10).....Prime Minister, who is facing (11)..... growing criticism over (12)..... way (13).....present crisis is being handled. (14) MPs are increasingly voicing (15)..... fears that despite (16)..... recent devaluation of (17)pound and cuts in (18).....interest rates, (19) government still expects (20)..... recovery of the economy to take three or even four years. To make (21) matters worse, (22)..... number of small business going into (23) liquidation is still at (24).....record level, and (25) housing market is showing no signs of recovery. Some backbenchers expect (26).....general election before (27) end of (28)..... winter unless there is (29) rapid change of (30) fortune.

2

Correct the
errors in
these
sentences.

- a) It's not a first-class accommodation unless it has a private bathroom.
It's not first-class accommodation unless it has a private bathroom.
- b) On this record twins play piano duet.
- c) The halfway through meal we realised what waiter had said.
- d) If the Mrs. Hillier phones, say I'm away on trip.
- e) There is a wonderful scenery in eastern part of Turkey.
- f) Cocker spaniel is one of most popular pet dogs.
- g) There is going to be fog and a cold weather all the next week.



h)

The burglaries are definitely on increase

- i) I spent very interesting holiday at the Lake Coniston in England.
- j) We are against war in general, so of course we are against war like this between superpower and developing country.

Choose the most
suitable word
underlined. A
dash (-) means
that no article is
needed.

- a) Helen doesn't like the/- cream cakes sold in a/the local bakery.
- b) The/- basketball is fast becoming a/the popular sport worldwide.
- c) We could see that the/- Alps were covered in the/- snow.

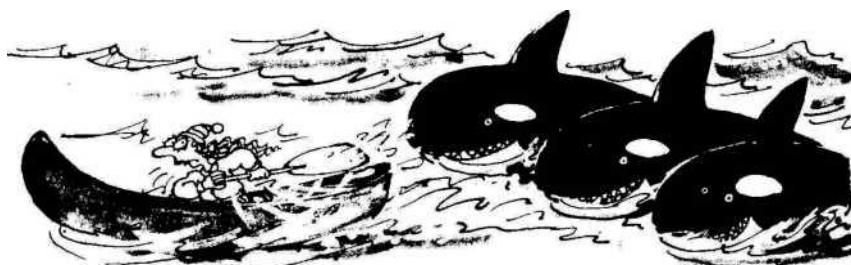
- d) It's a/- long time since I met a/- lovely person like you!
- e) Diana has a/- degree in the/- engineering from the/- University of London.
- g) At the/- present moment, the/- man seems to have the/an uncertain future.
- f) The/- problem for the/- today's students is how to survive financially.
- g) The/- French enjoy spending holidays in the/- countryside.
- h) Please do not turn on a/the water-heater in a/the bathroom.
- j) Sue bought a/the Picasso I was telling you about the/- last week.

In each space
put *a/an* or
the, or leave
the space
blank.

- a) I'm going to stand for — Parliament at..... next election.
- b) When I leftstation, I had to stand inqueue for taxi for long time.
- c) We took..... trip around London and saw..... Tower Bridge.
- d) happiness of the majority depends onhard work from everyone.
- e) most main roads in this part of.....country follow line of roads built by Romans.
- f) Have you got..... latest record by Gipsy Kings ?
- g) If I had time, I would like to take up.....archery.
- h) We spent pleasant evening havingdrink at Robin Hood.
- i) Nile flows right though city.
- j)summer I spent in.....USA was one ofbest in my life.

In each space
put *a/an* or
the, or leave
the space
blank.

- a) Go down — Kingston Street and turn right into Mill Road.
- b) Please let me carry shopping. It's.....least I can do.
- c) I don't like milk in..... coffee.



- d) She was first woman to cross Atlantic in canoe.
- e) Jim became.....furniture salesman after leaving school.
- f) Atend of busy day,..... sleep is best tonic.
- g) James Joyce I knew wasn't novelist and wasn't Irish either.
- h) We'll go for..... walk if.....sun comes out.
- i) This is..... last time I do you favour for..... while.
- j) I'm staying in Hilton so you can leave me message.

6

Correct the
errors in
these
sentences.

- a) The time you spend on the relaxing pastime is good for you.
The time you spend on a relaxing pastime is good for you.
- b) Don't you work in record shop in High Street?

- c) A new campaign against the smoking is directed at the young women.
- d) The leader of the team is usually called captain.
- e) A half the time I get phone call it's wrong number.
- f) I saw brilliant rock band perform at the Isle of Wight rock festival.
- g) Do you know what the difference there is between the stoat and the weasel?
- h) At the half-time the both teams seemed in a difficulty.
- i) The earthquake could easily damage the Channel Tunnel.
- j) A painting I like best is the one not for a sale.

In each space
put *a/an* or *the*,
or leave the
space *blank*.

- a) Please watch *the* cabin attendant as she demonstrates use of oxygen mask.
- b) Paul spent..... half of his life in Far East.
- c) You have to use at least.....pint and half of milk.
- d) Dick has sore throat and is taking.....medicine.
- e) We arranged.....accommodation on..... outskirts of.....city.
- f) There isvery difficult crossword in..... *Times*.
- g) Could you give me.....information I asked for in letter I sent you?
- h) I bought.....jewellery for my sister but it wasn't kind she likes.
- i) I always wanted to be astronaut but ambition wore off.
- j) And..... last of all, don't forget to put ... cat out for..... night.

8

Choose the
most suitable
word
underlined. A
dash (-) means
that no article
is needed.

- a) Brenda is the/- ideal for a/the job. She has a/-wealth of the/- experience.
Brenda is ideal for the job. She has a wealth of experience.
- b) The/- safety at the/- work is a/- major concern for us.
- c) The/- poorest people in the/- country live in this city.
- d) Have you seen a/the new 'Hamlet' at the/- National Theatre?
- e) There is a/- beautiful countryside within an/- easy reach of a/the hotel.
- f) I have a /- terrible cold and am staying in the/- bed today.
- g) I earn £3 an/the hour as a/- supermarket cashier on the/- Saturdays.
- h) The/- charge for an/- excess luggage is £ 10 a/the kilo.
- i) The/- most of the/- life is a/- matter of getting on with the/- others.
- j) This country is officially called The/- United Kingdom of The/- Great Britain and The/- Northern Ireland.

Barcodes

Bars and stripes

Every time we go shopping at a supermarket, the price of each item is read from the barcode.

BAR CODES appear on just about everything we buy. They are patterns of thick and thin stripes, or bars, which an electronic scanner reads.

The stripes represent the 13-digit number underneath. An 8-digit bar code is used if there is not enough space on the packaging.

There are four main pieces of information on a bar code. The first two numbers represent the country in which the product was registered. This does not have to be the country of manufacture. The code for the UK and Ireland is 50. Some countries have three-digit codes: South Korea is 880 – to commemorate the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

Next comes the manufacturer's or supplier's code. Each manufacturer has a unique code. For



example, Cadbury* is 00183, Nestle* is 00243 and McVitie* is 00168.

The third group which has five 5 numbers represents the product and the package size, but not the price. The manufacturers can choose any number they want. Different producers can have the same number for their goods. 20389 might be a tube of toothpaste for one manufacturer and a tin of tomatoes for another. Bar codes also help shops with re-ordering. A shop's computer recognises the whole shape of a bar code when it passes across the scanner at a shop's checkout counter. It reads the bar code and the price of the product appears on

the till display. At the same time one item is deducted from the stock total.

Security

Finally, the code finishes with a check digit that makes sure the bar code has been keyed in correctly. If not, the item 334540 will either not be recognised or will be shown as a totally different product.

COUNTRY CODES

Some examples of country codes are:

00-09 US and Canada

30-37 France

400-440 Germany

45,49 Japan

57 Denmark

80-83 Italy

93 Australia

There are also two special codes that take the place of country codes for the following:

977 Newspapers and magazines

978 Books

* *Cadbury*: chocolate manufacturer

* *Nestle*: food manufacturer. Products include coffee and chocolate.

* *McVitie*: food manufacturer

TheGuar

